



Carlos Alvarez, Mayor

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**For-Hire Taxicab Advisory Group (TAG)
Tuesday, March 8, 2011 2:00 PM
140 West Flagler Street, Room 908**

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **Approval of Minutes of 10-26-2010**
3. **Selection of Chauffeur of the Quarter, 2010 (4th Quarter)**
4. **Selection of 2010 - Chauffeur of the Year**
5. **Taxicab Stand Update**
6. **Legislative Update:**
 - Commissioner Souto' Ordinance
 - Commissioner Diaz' proposed Ordinance Amendment
7. **Gas Prices**
8. **Interior Blue Decal**
9. **Taxi Receipts – Section 31-86(a)**
10. **PSC Dispatching Rotation**
11. **OTC Tower II – 601 NW 1 Court, 18th Floor, Miami, FL 33136**
12. **Mediation Center**
13. **Adjournment**

(Please calendar 2011 Quarterly Meeting dates: April 5, July 26 & October 25, 2011)

Minutes of the Taxicab Advisory Group (TAG)
October 26, 2010 - 2:30 PM
140 W. Flagler Street, Room #908

Members Present:

Les Eisenberg	PSC Principal
Diego Feliciano	License Holder
Jerry Moskowitz	PSC Principal
William Samek, Ph.D.	Consumer/Chairperson
Monica Beltran	MIA Representative
Fred Wong, Jr.	Seaport Representative
Robert Singer	Consumer
Dawood Akhtar	Chauffeur
Ilene Hyams	Office of ADA Coordination Representative
Rolando Aedo	Visitor Industry Representative
Anson Jean-Pierre	Chauffeur

Staff Present:

Joe Mora	Director, PTRD
Steven Bobes	AO3, PTRD
Ivan Cotayo	Taxi Stand Coordinator
Bridgette Newsome	Secretary, PTRD
Nancy Perez	Senior Executive Secretary, CSD

Mr. Mora conducted member roll call and informed the Vice Chair a quorum was present.

Vice Chair Moskowitz called the meeting to order, welcomed members and the newly appointed driver representative, Mr. Anson Jean-Pierre, who provided a brief introduction. Mr. Moskowitz stated he would run today's meeting until Dr. Samek arrived.

Mr. Moskowitz requested corrections be made to the September 30, 2010 minutes and read them into the record. Mr. Eisenberg moved the 9/30/2010 minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Hyams, with unanimous approval.

Chauffeur of the 3rd Quarter (2010): Ms. Beltran nominated driver 3-4 as Chauffeur of the Quarter, seconded by Mr. Wong, with unanimous approval.

Taxi Stands Update: Mr. Mora provided a taxicab stand report update and identified new stands located at Canyon Ranch, Viceroy Spa, Days Inn Unincorporated Dade County, Four Point Sheraton Bal Harbor Resort and Best Western Beach Resort. During the Art Basel event temporary stands will be located at: Miami Beach Convention Center and Midtown Miami NE 1 Street between 29th & 30th Street. CSD' is working with NASCAR to establish stands for their event in Homestead. In total: 181 taxi stands have been established, providing a total of 458 spaces, to exclude the Airport and Seaport.

Mr. Aedo questioned the stand at the Viceroy and noted a stand currently exists there. He believed the better spot was adjacent to the new JW Marriott and Epic. Mr. Feliciano replied, when you have taxi stands you don't have buying of doors (BOD) and commended CSD staff for a job well done in creating stands throughout the county. Discussion followed regarding establishing new taxi stands at: Magic City Casino; MIA's new rental car facility, the EPIC Center and J.W. Marriott Hotels in downtown Miami. Mr. Mora replied a 3-car stand has been established at Magic City Casino; CSD is currently working with MIA and FDOT to establish taxi stands at the rental car facility. CSD will explore the new hotels and work with the City of Miami's Offstreet Parking.

Dr. Samek joined the meeting.

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Legislative Updates:

Comm. Martinez' Proposed Ordinance:

Mr. Mora reviewed Commissioner Gimenez's instructions at the October Government Operations Committee meeting in which he requested County Staff survey various jurisdictions utilizing credit cards and prepare a report for the November GOC meeting.

Mr. Eisenberg and Mr. Feliciano questioned what other jurisdictions having convenience fees do and charge. Mr. Moskowitz suggested Commissioners did not understand the players and thought staff should explain the difference between drivers, permit holders/owners and consumers. Mr. Moskowitz also stated, he believed it would ultimately be drivers who would be burdened to pay these fees, under no circumstances will permit holders absorb the fees or be tasked with policing equipment and, although credit cards are beneficial to drivers, they do not view it in that light. Ms. Hyams voiced, consumers should be given a choice. Mr. Eisenberg remarked, no one should have to pay if there were incentives provided.

Mr. Mora noted the credit card requirements only applied to the 10 licenses in Commissioner Martinez's proposed Ordinance. If a medallion holder desired to incorporate at that time they would need to comply with the technology.

A company representative remarked that if companies are allowed to charge passengers his entire fleet of 300 cabs would be placed into service. Others said customers do not mind paying a convenience fee but the amount being charged is exorbitant. Members questioned who is responsible for equipment failure and routine maintenance.

Mr. Feliciano moved to recommend that staff accept a format like "TaxiPass" if they lower the 10% fee to a more reasonable flat fee. Mr. Eisenberg seconded for discussion purposes.

Mr. Mora reiterated as a Commission sponsored item CSD does not have authority to change it. Dr. Samek inquired whether TAG could form an opinion. Mr. Mora responded that TAG is welcome to speak with their elected officials. Mr. Moskowitz agreed with the motion but wanted a flat fee for credit card use. Other members voiced opposition to passing the cost onto consumers. They could not support the motion and said drivers would make more money in tips if they offered credit cards.

Mr. Feliciano offered a new motion recommending customers pay one flat uniform convenience fee countywide, and to lower the current percentage rate of 10% to a nominal flat fee. Ms. Hyams suggested instead of saying 10% it should state the most reasonable percentage to get the job done. Members requested a dollar amount be placed in his motion. Mr. Feliciano stated he would accept the \$3.00 amount to his motion.

Dr. Samek remarked having credit cards was critically important and agreed the public should not pay for these fees. Ms. Beltran & Mr. Aedo believed in the event the group came to an agreement, the basic understanding was cabs should take credit cards.

Ms. Beltran suggested the County put out a bid proposal. Mr. Mora responded, in order to do that standards would have to be crafted. Ms. Beltran requested staff obtain the NYC documents regarding credit card use for review. Mr. Mora restated this proposal only affects 10 licenses designated in Commissioner Martinez proposed legislation. Mr. Eisenberg stated although it only affects 10 now, this will set precedent in the industry.

Minutes of the Taxicab Advisory Group (TAG)

October 26, 2010 - 2:30 PM

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Mr. Moskowitz seconded the motion for discussion. Discussion continued regarding placement of technology in all cabs countywide, technology standards and equipment.

Mr. Moskowitz discussed a motion passed a year ago that would place technology in taxi's in exchange for transferability and was concerned that the current motion would rescind TAG's prior motion.

Mr. Feliciano requested Staff read his motion. Mr. Bobes read into record Mr. Feliciano's motion: One uniform flat fee for taxi credit card use, no more than a \$3.00 credit card user fee that customers would pay. For clarity, drivers would not pay for credit card technology, cabs countywide would have to comply, not just the 10 described in Commissioner Martinez proposed ordinance. The motion passed 8 in favor and 3 opposed.

Mr. Feliciano advised various members of the taxi industry have brought to his attention a section of the 1998 Ordinance regarding the responsible party for paying inspection fees; owners (permit holders) pay for these inspection fees. He said, the ordinance should be revised as permit holders were not responsible for drivers, or their associated fees and also suggested, the Board has never been advised that the 1998 Ordinance does not work and requested this be changed.

Mr. Feliciano offered a motion to recommend the Board change the 1998 rule regarding permit holder inspection fees to owners of vehicles paying for inspection fees. Mr. Moskowitz seconded the motion. Mr. Eisenberg said he could not support it.

Mr. Moskowitz offered a motion that stated: TAG should prepare a letter with suggested recommendations to include TAG's reasoning and support of Commissioner Martinez proposed ordinance. That letter should also include the formula on how the proposed "10" lottery cabs came about and set the record straight. Dr. Samek called the motion that was seconded by Ms. Hyams and approved. Dr. Samek requested Mr. Moskowitz assist in writing the letter to Commissioners.

Mr. Mora stated prior to Commissioner Martinez proposed ordinance the Commissioner sought input and requested industry submit recommendations to his office. The Commissioner took those recommendations and brought forth his proposed legislation. The department can not prohibit members from writing letters to the Board.

Passenger Motor Carrier (PMC) Ordinance

Mr. Mora provided an update on the PMC Ordinance submitted for first reading on October 16, 2010 but later withdrawn for further review. It is hopeful this proposed legislation will be placed on an agenda sometime after the holidays. Mr. Eisenberg questioned why the withdrawal and rules governing reciprocity. He said it didn't exist in the current version of the Code and would further exasperate the situation existing with PMC's. Members discussed the reciprocity and various other issues of concern. Mr. Mora said this item was place on the agenda for information only.

In follow-up to a request by Vice Chair Moskowitz at LAG's September meeting, Mr. Mora discussed a topic regarding luxury sedans, vehicle age and service entry. The TAG Committee saw no further reason to discuss.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Akhtar moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Eisenberg, and approved by all. The TAG meeting adjourned.

CHAUFFEUR NOMINATIONS
October – December 2010
4th Quarter

Nomination #4-1

CR original application 06/24/2009

Citations 0 – Complaints 0

In an email to the Consumer Services Department the passenger writes:

Dear Mr. BTV Miami Dade:

I want to report excelent very good service from (the nominee). I took a Taxi Cab on November 10, 2010 from the Dolphin Mall to the Hyatt Place hotel.

(the nominee) was:

- Extremely respectfull
- Very, very clean unit
- A good flavor scent smelled in all car
- A good music compilation
- He gave a good conversation during trip
- He helped me with my luggage
- I strongly recommend (the nominee) as a taxi driver, and if I the opportunity, I will choose his car for a new trip for sure

Thank you very much for your choosing (the nominee), and keep selecting people like him.

Kindest regards,
Juan Carlos Gilbert
Samsung Electronics Ecuador

Nomination #4-2 Intentionally omitted

Nomination #4-3

CR original application 04/14/2004

Citations 0 – Complaints 0

In a letter to the Consumer Services Department, the passenger writes:

Yesterday (December 13, 2010 I got a ride with a taxi driver from MIA to my house. In the mean time I lost my purse. A short time after my ride the taxi driver returned to my house knocked on the door and returned my purse. I checked the purse and everything was there. I became so happy which can't be described in words when I got my purse

back which was very important to me because it contained my resident card, social security card library card, bank credit cards, other important documents, and money too.

I really appreciate your service and I really appreciate the excellent service of that taxi driver (the nominee). I was really surprised by his honesty. The most wonderful thing is that he returned the purse without having been called or telling me that he would bring it by when he had free time. He did not want me to worry so that is why he brought it to me right away, during his busy time.

I am suggesting as a customer, to keep honest drivers to help customers like that. I will recommend everyone to use his service with great trust.

Finally, I also appreciate, and am thankful to all of the authorities of the Miami-Dade Consumer Service Department for your best service.

Yours Sincerely,

Yamileth Zeledon

Nomination #4-4

CR original application 06/19/2007

Citations 0 – Complaints 0

In an e-mail submitted to the Consumer Services Department the passenger writes:

Hi Steven,

I am writing to you because I wanted to recognize a kind act from one of your taxi drivers, (the nominee) His driver # is xxxxx.

Last weekend, I left my phone on his taxi and when I called my number (the nominee) answered my phone and asked for a number where he can reach me so that he could return my phone and as promised he called me as soon as he was heading over to meet with me and returned my iPhone.

I have to say I am very pleased to know that there are still honest taxi drivers and many others should follow his actions.

Best Regards,
Maritza

Nomination #4-5

CR original application 11/14/1986

Citations 2 (Paid) – Complaints 1 (unfounded)

In an e-mail to the Consumer Services Department, the passenger writes:

I write this email to let you know that I'm very happy for the service given to me and my family by (the nominee). He took us in his cab to the greyhound bus station and explained things that we, as desperate tourists wanted to know, then as we were in a hurry because of our cancelled flight we left a laptop with a hard drive carrying very important information for me in the backseat of the cab.

We went back to the airport and (the nominee) very gently founds us back at the airport and gave us everything, intact. I ask him a way to thank him and let his boss know that he's doing a great job. I'm very pleased and if all the employees were like (the nominee) things would be different. You're lucky to have him and we were lucky to have left our stuff in his cab.

Thanks a lot.

Elva Ontaneda R.

CHAUFFEUR NOMINATIONS

2010 Chauffeur of the Year

First Quarter 2010

Nomination #1-2

CR original application 06/15/2001

Citation(s) 1 Paid – Complaints 1

In an e-mail submitted to the Consumer Services Department, the customer wrote:

Dear Mr. Bobes,

Thank you for calling me back so quickly.

I am the director of EF International Language Schools located at 2469 Collins Ave, Miami Beach, FL. One of our new students from Russia got into a cab somewhere in South Beach and was dropped off at the Grand Beach Hotel at 4835 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33140-2751. When he got out of the cab, he left behind a bag with his passport, student visa, cellular phone and credit cards inside.

When the driver looked in the bag, he saw the passport with the visa which has the name and address of our school. He came to the school and dropped everything off with our receptionist. This morning, when I told he student we had his bag, he could not stop hugging and kissing me. He was so happy.

As I told you on the phone, I run a staff of 20+ people, at a school with an average of 350 to 400 students per week, and what I always tell them is that the most important thing we can do for our customers is to give a damn. And this driver does. He gave a damn about the person and took the time to come here and drop the bag. He has saved this young man, who barely speaks any English, an amazing amount of trouble. The closest place for him to replace his passport is Washington DC, and let's not even talk of the nightmare it would be to get his visa and credit cards replaced.

I hope my report will help you find this driver and recommend him for some sort of recognition. In a city not famous for customer service, this driver is a bright spot that deserves recognition

Thank you for your attention

Ana van Gilst
School Director
EF Miami
2469 Collins Ave
Miami Beach - FL - 33140

**Second Quarter 2010
Nomination #2-5 -**

Nominee A (Chauffeur with the property)
CR original application 09/27/2002
Citations 1 (Paid) – Complaints 0

In an e-mail to the Consumer Services Department, the passenger writes:

I am sending a very long over due thank you and acknowledgement of appreciation for a couple of the cab drivers registered within the Miami / Dade County system.

April 1st my family of 5 (mom/dad and 3 kids) traveled to Miami for a much anticipated trip to Miami and proceed on to a 3 day cruise to the Bahamas. When we arrived into the Miami airport we immediately caught a cab to our hotel, spent the rest of the day and evening exploring the Bayside area on the water and having a great time.

Upon returning to our hotel room our 10 year old was looking for his PSP and that was when we discovered he must have left his cinch sack bag in the cab we rode in from the airport. By this time it was 10pm and I was concerned we would never find the bag again. This bag contained not only his PSP, but an iPod, multiple games and movies for the PSP, a fleece jacket not to mention power cords of all the equipment, all total we estimated the value of contents of the bag to be about \$500, we were very depressed.

With little to go on I started making phone calls to a company I thought was the cab service we were in (as it turned out it was the wrong company), I also tried to call the airport, but of course with the time of night there was no one in answering phones. The only real clue we had about who we might talk to was that the cab drivers first name was (deleted) and his last name started with (deleted).

The next morning we caught a cab to the cruise ship dock and during the ride we started telling the cab driver, (nominee B), our dilemma with the lost bag, he totally understood our despair and offered up many potential solutions. He was incredibly helpful and went so far as taking my cell phone number, giving me his and offered to make a few phone calls and talk to some folks at the airport and get back to us before our ship took sail at 5pm that evening with any information he might have been able to find out about the possibility of finding the bag.

(Nominee B) left us about 11am at the dock and by 3pm he was calling me back with a phone number and a name of a person at the office in Miami that oversees ALL the cab drivers in Miami. That person was Steven Bobes and he too was incredibly helpful, when I explained to him our situation and I asked if there was anyway to search his system for an (deleted) with a last name that started with (deleted) he was not quite sure, but offered to try.

Sure enough he came across only two (deleted). At that point Steven offered to call them both and see if either of them had found a back with electronics. Within 30 - 45 minutes, Steven was calling me back with news I truly did not think I would get, he FOUND the BAG!!!!!! Steven then gave me the cell phone number of (the nominee B), who was the cab driver we rode with on Thursday April 1st, and who had found our bag in his car just that morning Friday April 2nd!

I immediately called (nominee B) to not only figure out how we could get the bag back from him, but also to thank him for being so kind as to admit he found the bag! With a bag of unidentified electronics like this, it would have been so easy for anyone to say no, haven't seen it and keep or sell the equipment for cash. Not (nominee B) though!!!! He was so kind and helpful and wanted to do whatever he could to get the belongings back to the family that lost them.

Because our ship was about to sail within a couple hours, there was no way to meet up with (nominee B) before we left for our weekend trip on the ship. With that, he offered to hold on to the bag and protect it for us over the weekend and we could contact him on Monday when we docked to meet him to get the bag back. That was exactly what we did.

We called him as soon as we were off the ship and he agreed to meet us back where he originally had dropped us off on Thursday April 1st and we would get the bag back, so that is what we did and our 10 year old son could not have been happier when he saw the (nominee B) pull up.

So to end this very long email, I just want to say without the help of (nominee A), Steven Bobes, and of course (nominee B) our vacation could have really had a sad memory built into it, but because these 3 gentleman, in our opinion went way above what they would have had to do, our vacation has nothing but WONDERFUL memories! Please recognize the nominees and Steven for being outstanding cab drivers and employees of the Miami-Dade County cab service system!!!!

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Yours Truly the Schmitz Family
Russ, Brenda, Landon, Katie and Nolan (the winner in this whole event, because he got his bag back)

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Third Quarter 2010
Nomination #3-4
CR original application 07/22/2009
Citations 0 – Complaints 0

In an e-mail submitted to the Consumer Services Department the passenger writes:

Hello my name is Charles Hobbs and on August the 3rd I had an appointment in Miami. On that morning I came out of my hotel and my car wouldn't start so I had to call a cab.

3Q:\Taxi Driver Incentive Program\2010\10 Chauffeur of the Year\10 Chauffeur of the Year Nomination
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The driver showed up and we talked on the way to my appointment and I enjoyed the conversation so I had him give his personal number so I could call him and get a ride back to my hotel.

I told him about my car not starting and when we got back to my car he got out and took a look at it. It turned out it was just my battery so we tried to boost it off and it wouldn't work so I had him take me to walmart to buy a new battery. After purchasing the battery we went back to my car where he got out again to help me install the battery. The bolt that mounts the battery was very rusted and we couldn't get it to loosen. He then went, and out of his own pocket, and bought me a can of WD-40. We sprayed it on the bolt and was waiting a few minutes for it to soak in and he got a call for a trip and he told me he would be back.

I kept trying to get the bolt off and sure enough he showed back up. It was very hot that day so we took turns back and forth trying to get the bolt off. He then got another call and told me he would be back. I figured at that point I would be on my own because we had spent close to an hour already trying to get the bolt off. The only thing I could think of was to find something to break the bolt with so I started walking to find an auto parts store.

After walking a few blocks my new friend spotted me walking and did a quick turn around and took me to a mechanic shop to get the stuff to break the bolt. We then went back to my car and he helped me break the bolt and install my battery. He made sure the car got started and we were saying our goodbyes and I asked him how I could call his boss and let him know just how good of an employee and person he had working for him. He gave the information and that's why I'm writing this letter.

During our time together I told him that I had a set of twins that were 11 months old that have cystic fibrosis and how bad I needed to get back home, and he shared his story of his family being out of the country and how much he missed them. Maybe that is what made him make the extra effort, I don't know. But I do know without the help of your cab driver I wouldn't have made it home to my family as quick as I did. If all of your drivers have the same caring soul as this one, then you run a great community service.

The driver's ID number was xxxxx, I'm not sure if you have any type of awards for employees that go the extra mile for their customers, but if you do he would be the perfect candidate.

Thank you for your time.

Charles Hobbs
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Pikeville, Ky 41501
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